

Public Hearing – March 5, 2019
Energy and Technology Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Katie S. Dykes

H.B. No. 7152 – An Act Accelerating the Deployment of 5G Wireless Facilities

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding House Bill No. 7152 – An Act Accelerating the Deployment of 5G Wireless Facilities. The purpose of this bill is twofold, 1) to create a Council on 5G Technology to accept and review requests from wireless carriers for the use of state real properties for the placement, construction, maintenance, and operation of personal wireless service facilities and small wireless facilities; and 2) to establish a process for siting small wireless facilities on municipal property.

The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) supports this bill's focus on promoting connectivity and access to ultra-fast internet speeds, which is critical to Connecticut's economic development. While there is a process in place for placement of 5G infrastructure on utility poles and wires, in many high-density areas utility distribution infrastructure is undergrounded, thus alternative siting is needed to ensure adequate coverage. Creating an efficient process for access to state property for 5G infrastructure that prioritizes consideration of public safety and environmental impacts will help Connecticut reach its critical goal of attracting and retaining highly skilled employment opportunities and supporting new technologies and devices in the future.

DEEP looks forward to working closely with the Committee and other stakeholders on this bill to ensure that siting of small cell infrastructure on State land under the care and control of DEEP prioritizes and maximizes public benefits such as emergency response capabilities and connectivity consistent with recreational use while also being consistent with DEEP's environmental stewardship of those properties.

We welcome the opportunity to work with the committee on this important initiative.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mandi Careathers, the Department's legislative liaison, at Mandi.Careathers@ct.gov.